

# Stop toxic work culture

## The responsibility of the management and supervisory bodies\*

Almost every day we read about companies and organizations where a toxic work culture has built up over the years. It is often a mystery how it is possible that management and supervisory bodies were unable or unwilling to recognize this in good time.

Well, we humans have a somewhat unpleasant habit. When we see signs of problems and conflicts, we like to look away first. If only out of fear that we ourselves will become part of the problem or conflict.

But it is precisely this behavior that is often fatal for companies and organizations. Because if the problems and conflicts are not just marginal or temporary, they spread like a cancer throughout the organization.



### Looking away is not an option

The fact that people often look the other way harbors immense dangers. In extreme cases, it can even herald the beginning of the end for a company. Poor cooperation and communication quickly have an impact on efficiency, effectiveness and performance. The resulting damage to image and reputation can have long-lasting effects.

For this reason, it is downright negligent for management and supervisory bodies to ignore or tolerate deep-seated problems and conflicts in organizations over long periods of time. But why does it happen again and again?

A toxic work culture does not develop overnight. It begins with the behavior and actions of individuals or groups of people. Initially, it is insidious and hidden in everyday life, but over time it becomes more and more open and visible to everyone in the organization. This is the latest point at which management should intervene. But they don't because this is often associated with unpleasant and painful decisions, or because managers themselves are part of the problem or conflict.

At this point, the supervisory bodies would be called upon. However, these bodies rarely have the necessary and,

above all, reliable information. This is because the classic method of employee surveys which should provide the information, has various shortcomings and weaknesses in this context.

### Employee surveys – why they fail

1. Employee surveys have always been geared towards measuring employee commitment or employee satisfaction. A targeted examination of the corporate or work culture only takes place every few years, if at all.
2. Questions on critical topics are often avoided in surveys. The focus is too often consciously or unconsciously on the interest in good survey results.
3. Once a corporate culture has become toxic, you can no longer expect authentic feedback in surveys. In such an environment, every employee will think twice about giving open and honest feedback.
4. With a few exceptions, survey response rates have been falling for years. One of the reasons is that young people in particular are no longer willing to take part in surveys that exclude the really burning issues.

### Recognizing and stopping toxic cultures

In order to recognize toxic work cultures in their early stages, when they are still easy to combat, a direct form of employee feedback is needed instead of employee surveys that bypass critical issues.

Such a feedback tool must be able to reliably and efficiently identify where toxic cultures arise. To do this, it must fulfill the following three basic criteria.

1. A high level of anonymity protection for authentic feedback.
2. Individual feedback without time and thematic restrictions.
3. Differentiated and analyzable feedback to enable targeted action.

The SMART FED feedback portal was developed on the basis of these requirements. It is unique in many respects and helps companies to identify toxic cultures in a timely manner, but also to increase the efficiency, effectiveness and performance of organizations in a targeted manner.

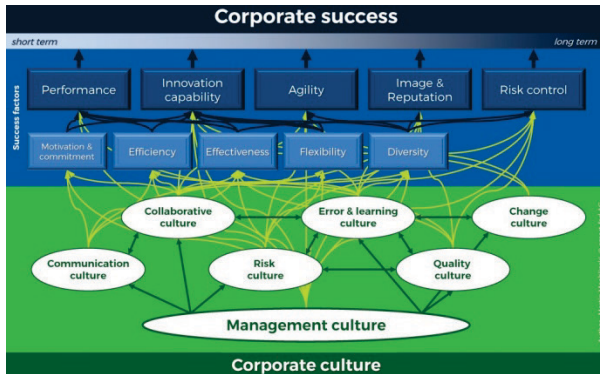
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\*Supervisory boards, boards of directors, foundation boards, authorities, etc.

# Publications

<https://smart-fed.com/en/publications/>

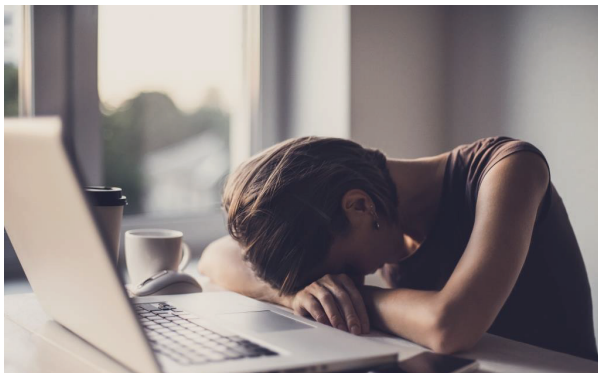
## Corporate Culture



## Dimensions Of Appreciation



## Low Response Rates?



## Employee Surveys & Feedback

Forms of employee surveys and employee feedback in companies.

Mood barometer	Pulse surveys	Microsurveys	Employee surveys	Smart feedback
Address: <input type="checkbox"/> office <input type="checkbox"/> organization	Address: <input type="checkbox"/> office <input type="checkbox"/> organization	Address: <input type="checkbox"/> office <input type="checkbox"/> organization	Address: <input type="checkbox"/> office <input type="checkbox"/> organization	Address: <input type="checkbox"/> office <input type="checkbox"/> organization
Form: <input type="checkbox"/> online	Form: <input type="checkbox"/> online	Form: <input type="checkbox"/> online	Form: <input type="checkbox"/> online <input type="checkbox"/> paper/online	Form: <input type="checkbox"/> online
Structure: <input type="checkbox"/> linear	Structure: <input type="checkbox"/> linear	Structure: <input type="checkbox"/> linear	Structure: <input type="checkbox"/> linear	Structure: <input type="checkbox"/> tree structure <input type="checkbox"/> linear <input type="checkbox"/> network
Interval: <input type="checkbox"/> daily	Interval: <input type="checkbox"/> weekly to monthly	Interval: <input type="checkbox"/> weekly to semi-annually	Interval: <input type="checkbox"/> annual to perennial	Interval: <input type="checkbox"/> t → at any time
Anonymity: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Anonymity: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Anonymity: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Anonymity: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Anonymity: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Individuality: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Individuality: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Individuality: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Individuality: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	Individuality: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Goal: Measurement of the general mood in the organization.	Goal: Measurement of the general working climate on the basis of established characteristics.	Goal: Identification of the company's Employee Experience Measurement (EEM).	Goal: Measurement of employee satisfaction or employee engagement.	Goal: Identification of potentials for increasing employee motivation and commitment as well as increasing efficiency, effectiveness and performance of the organization.

**Legend:**  
 1. Near common occurrence  
 2. Protection of the anonymity of people giving feedback  
 3. Possibility for employees themselves to determine what and on what they would like to give feedback  
 4. Only if the data is evaluated by third parties and individual feedback cannot be directly or indirectly traced back to individuals. It is mostly organizational and demographic data.

## Sustainable Human Resource Management



## Employee Survey Smart



## Feedback Without Surveys



## Employee surveys vs. AI

